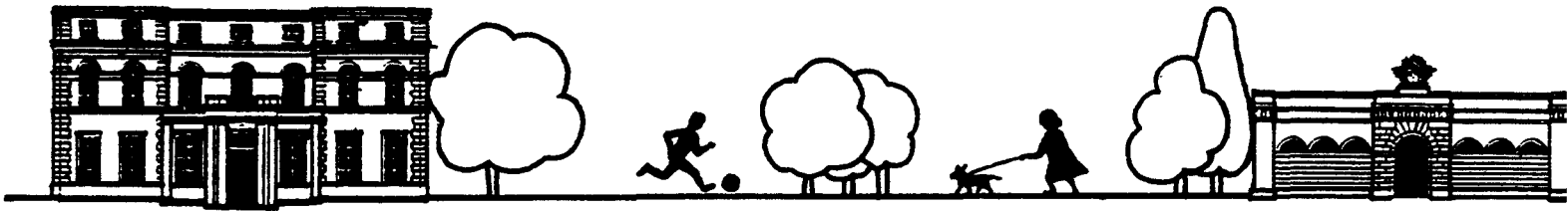


FRIENDS of GUNNERSBURY PARK & MUSEUM

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NEWSLETTER



● *BULB-PLANTING* ● *BULB-PLANTING* ● *BULB-PLANTING* ●

Volunteers are urgently needed to assist with The Great Bulb Planting, a project designed to ensure that Gunnersbury Park is more colourful next spring! The scheme has been in preparation for some time and thanks to the efforts of the gentlemen in the North Lodge 10,000 daffodil bulbs and 7,000 bluebells are ready to be planted along the Lionel Road perimeter of the Park **on Sunday 5 November from 10am**. Anyone can join in - the bulbs are provided - but you need to bring your own trowel or spade. Meet at the park gate on Lionel Road opposite the school.

☆☆☆ *CHRISTMAS CRACKER* ☆☆☆ *CHRISTMAS CRACKER* ☆☆☆

Come along to our "Christmas Cracker" in the Small Mansion in the Park on Sunday 3 December between 11am and 3pm. This is our annual winter fund-raising event, shared with other local charities, with lots of things to buy for yourself or as small presents!

EDITORIAL

The Friends of Gunnersbury Park & Museum emerged from a battle to prevent the Stables from being turned into an office block which took place in 1980. Over the last 15 years we have struggled to find good ideas and funds which would make it possible to enhance the park, encourage its use, develop the museum service and assist council members, their officers and the general public to recognise the huge potential of the Park and Museum. We found ourselves frequently able to contribute to small improvements - we raised funds with jumble sales and events, we bought the first walkie-talkies for park staff, partly funded the conversion of the former board room in the Large Mansion into an exhibition gallery, brought the Victorian Kitchens to life again with elbow-grease, de-rusting chemicals, paint stripper and cash, ran the cafés for three years to raise standards and funds and establish Gunnersbury as a venue for functions, redecorated the interior of the Temple, contributed to the cost of publishing the attractive booklet on the Rothschilds at Gunnersbury and sold mountains of bric-a-brac!

Our efforts have borne fruit though the scale of the funding now needed is beyond a small charitable organisation like ours. We have not achieved reached the present position alone. We have helped to create a climate in which people have looked more positively upon the Park but in the end the real change has come because of more powerful external bodies. English Heritage has exerted real pressure on the Joint Committee to devise a forward plan and offered some grant-aid. The Heritage Lottery Fund now exists to provide the kind of

huge grants which could fund the work needed (and has identified public parks as a priority area for support). And a large working party, on which the Friends were represented, has at last been able to produce the Development Plan.

It is this which will form the basis for a package of bids to the Heritage Lottery Fund. We can only applaud the fact that it is now possible to contemplate preparing such a bid. This is, however, a complex task requiring nearly 30 specific pieces of evidence to convince the trustees that the project is not only worthy but viable and Lottery grants never provide 100% of the funds needed for any project - there is still a long way to go!

The committee has been reviewing the future for the Friends and recognises that we may have given little to members recently, concentrating instead on continued fund-raising, support for and events and our input to the Development Plan. We hope to put together a lively programme with walks and events during the next year.
from next year.

OUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM took place in the Small Mansion on 16 August. The Chairman's Report outlined the year's work and described the support given to the Park and Museum by the Friends during the year. James Wisdom had taken an active role in the working party which produced the Development Plan. Joan Catterall and Marianne Booth had continued their fund-raising efforts. Joan Catterall had helped to organise the Gunnersbury Gala and had found the art exhibition held in aid of Yugoslav refugees which was put on in the Museum. Marianne Booth had continued to care for the small Conservatory at the end of the Large Mansion but was now to be replaced by Mr & Mrs Shirley. The Friends had taken a modest role in the debate about covenants on properties bordering the Park.

The business of campaigning for the survival and improvement of the Park and Museum could be scaled down for the first time in 15 years now that the Development Plan was completed and a Lottery bid could be prepared. The Committee aims to put more effort into events and activities for members and hopes to provide a programme of events (some linked to Museum exhibitions), park walks, the Fete and "Christmas Cracker" and to continue to assist with the Gunnersbury Gala each summer.

The Hon Treasurer's Report showed a healthy balance in the Charities Deposit Account. This could provide an opportunity for supporting the Park or Museum or both in a variety of ways. The Friends had had a small deposit with Barings but had not made a loss in spite of the collapse of the bank! During the year the Friends had made various donations, including £500 towards the purchase of a pallet truck for the Museum and £350 towards the costs of the Gala. Chris Dakers was thanked for his work in auditing the accounts and reappointed as auditor for next year.

The Chairman took the opportunity of thanking everyone concerned in committee work, fund-raising and other work for the Friends. After the main business was completed there was an opportunity to discuss the Gunnersbury Park Development Plan with Mike Rowan, the LB Hounslow officer who supervised the consultation exercise on the Plan.

The committee members are now Marianne Booth, Joan Catterall, Ken Hawkes, Pauline Hibbert, Helen Poskitt, Pauline Tett, Mr & Mrs Shirley, Vivienne Winning, James Wisdom.

FORTHCOMING MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS

The programme of exhibitions continues at Gunnersbury Park Museum in the Large Mansion - admission is free. Open November to March 1.00-4.00pm, closed 24-26 Dec & 1 Jan.

27 October 1995 *THE GREAT WEST ROAD*

An exhibition on the social and industrial development of this major arterial route. (There is a new publication on the history of the road available from Hounslow Libraries - can we say more, price?)

25 November 1995 - 6 January 1996 *THE ROCK & FOSSIL ROADSHOW*

An travelling interactive exhibition with a strong educational flavour, closely related to the National Curriculum, this includes a replica of a woolly mammoth and many large specimens which can be handled by visitors.

15 January - 15 April 1996 *A CENTURY OF ELECTRICITY IN THE HOME*

A look at a hundred years' use of domestic electricity, using items from the museum's own collection and some from the Science Museum and covering such topics as communication, cooking, cleaning, heating and health and beauty.

SEVENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF GUNNERSBURY PARK

A special exhibition will be arranged to mark the opening of the park to the public by the Rt Hon Neville Chamberlain in 1926, probably opening in March 1996. If you have souvenirs or memories of the early days of the park, they could be useful for the exhibition. The Museum telephone number is 0181-992 1612.

There have been a number of staff changes at the Museum. Séan Sherman took up the post of Deputy Curator in the summer and Sarah Levitt, the Curator, has returned part-time after her maternity leave. Further details of other changes will be given in the next Newsletter.

CAPEL MANOR AT GUNNERSBURY PARK

The Orangery was the setting for the presentation of awards to students at the end of their first year of training. Friends may remember that Capel Manor, the horticultural and agricultural college for Greater London, established Schools of Horticulture and Floristry at the Park and has invested in adaptations to buildings to make possible an extension of their courses for the new academic year. Various committee members represented the Friends at this event and they were so impressed that an offer has been made to fund a new award - for the student who has contributed the most to the Park during their training - for four years

CARS IN GUNNERSBURY PARK

Concern has been expressed at the number of cars using the Park as a cut-through from the bottom of Lionel Road to the car park gate. Park staff are aware of this problem and are taking steps to stop this dangerous practice.

ART IN THE PARK - THE SMALL MANSION ARTS CENTRE

Part of the Small Mansion has been used as an arts centre since 1986, housing artists' studios and gallery and teaching space. Evening classes and Saturday workshops are run from the Centre (telephone 0181-993 8312 for details). It is always a good idea to see what is going on there - Joan Catterall highly recommends the current display which includes a sculpture of spinning doughnuts! The Small Mansion has gone through a financial crisis this year and came close to being evicted. It now looks as though a rescue plan will be put in place and it will survive - but you can help by subscribing to their classes, visiting their shows and ensuring that the place remains alive.

ART IN THE PARK - THE TEMPLE

The Temple Trust has continued to provide an exhibition programme in the Temple beside the Round Pond. It depends on volunteers to help to staff the exhibitions so opening hours are limited. An exhibition on Princess Amelia, the daughter of George II and owner of Gunnersbury in the 18th century, is promised from November until early in 1996. This will be open by appointment so phone the Temple Trust on 0181-992 2248 to arrange a visit.

♥ ♥ VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! ♥ ♥

If you live near the Park and wouldn't mind leafletting a road or two, we could use you! Contact Joan Catterall about this on 0181-560 4262 - she would really appreciate your help.

Sometimes the Museum needs help from volunteers who could help steward an exhibition, stuff publicity material into envelopes, answer the telephone or talk to people about their memories of the area for the historical record. If you would be interested in becoming a Museum volunteer, contact Séan Sherman, Deputy Curator and he will put you on his list!

"GUNNERSBURY PARK & THE ROTHSCHILDS"

If you are looking for an unusual present for someone who knows the Park you can't do better than buy them a copy of *Gunnersbury Park & the Rothschilds* by Anne & James Collett-White. Anne was the Curator of the Museum when a major exhibition on this theme was held and wrote the book with her husband after a huge amount of new research. We helped to fund the publication and as a result we have a stock to sell. The book costs £6 per copy and is available from the address at the end of the Newsletter - if you are nearby we can deliver by hand. It features a wealth of illustrations, including some very beautiful early colour photos taken in the grounds.